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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY USSR

REPORT

SUBJECT

Comments on the Replacement of Shepilov
as Minister of Foreign Affairs of the
USSR

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A three-page analysis of the reasons behind the replacement of Dmitriy T. Shepilov
as Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR

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thesis is that the Leningrad Party
must have played a decisive role in a recent intra-Party struggle, which resulted
in personnel changes within the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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2. The decision to remove SHEPILOV was reached after the Session of the Supreme Soviet, at the Plenum of the Central Committee on 13-14 February 1957. This decision had not been formulated in the Presidium of the Central Committee, and had not been adopted prior to the Plenum of the Central Committee. Because of this, SHEPILOV was allowed to present the policy speech to the Session of the Supreme Soviet. The fact that SHEPILOV's policy speech was approved by the Supreme Soviet, but nevertheless SHEPILOV was removed from his post, is indicative that the inter-Party struggle at the Plenum of the Central Committee was extremely intense, since the Plenum chose to ignore even the basic rules of polite behavior in regard to the Supreme Soviet (sudden removal of SHEPILOV, immediately upon the approval of his policy speech by the Supreme Soviet). This is particularly noticeable in view of the recent Soviet press campaign directed at increasing the authority of the Supreme Soviet as the legitimate source of power in the Soviet Union. What caused the removal of SHEPILOV from the post of the Minister of Foreign Affairs? The primary cause was the struggle within the factions of the Presidium for the right to influence the external policy of the Soviet Union. SHEPILOV was a candidate of one of these factions, possibly KHRUSCHEV's faction. This faction had secured the majority vote within the Presidium and was instrumental for SHEPILOV's policy speech and for all its elements. The minority faction (or factions) carried the struggle into the Plenum of the Central Committee after SHEPILOV's speech was made public. This faction (or factions) had failed to capture the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It managed, however, to deprive its opposition (KHRUSCHEV's faction) of exclusive control over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and to place this Ministry outside of the inter-Party factions' manipulation. The Ministry was thus placed into the hands of a bureaucrat official, GROMYKO, who is not a member of the Presidium, which represented a form of a compromise. In this new type of position, GROMYKO is considerably less independent than was SHEPILOV, and is guided primarily by the decisions of the Presidium as a whole, and not by any one particular faction thereof. The formulation of Soviet foreign policy, as of now, also becomes the domain of the entire Presidium group, and not of certain elements within this body. The direct cause which prompted the attack on SHEPILOV and on the faction

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which supported him, it is supposed, was the thesis on co-existence in its "new" form. In the speech of SHEPILOV this thesis appears as follows: "Peaceful co-existence is not a tranquil life. As long as there are various social and political systems, the contradictions among them are unavoidable. Peaceful co-existence is a struggle-- political struggle, economic struggle, ideological struggle." It is a known fact that until now the Soviet thesis emphasized primarily the "ideological struggle." SHEPILOV, in his speech, has formulated the principles of "cold war," the principles of total struggle in all endeavors of life, so far, however, without the application of military means. This thesis expressed by SHEPILOV in his speech on 12 February 1957 was immediately played up by the Soviet press. On 13 and 14 February 1957 the thesis was presented in a number of leading newspapers, in the form of editorials (see, for instance, "Literaturnaya Gazeta," 14 February 1957). Upon the removal of SHEPILOV as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, references to the thesis presented by SHEPILOV in his speech on 12 February 1957 were eliminated. The editorial in "Pravda," 19 February 1957, dedicated to the subject of Soviet foreign policy, makes no mention of SHEPILOV's speech. Only on 20 February 1957, did "Pravda" demonstrate a reaction to SHEPILOV's thesis. "Pravda" carried a speech by KHRUSCHEV given at the Bulgarian Embassy in Moscow, in which KHRUSCHEV defended the substance of SHEPILOV's speech of 12 February, stating that the political lines set by SHEPILOV remain unchanged. KHRUSCHEV particularly stressed, although politely, "What should we do, smile and pretend that we do not notice it?" (Referring to the activities of the "capitalists" in reference to SHEPILOV's definition of "peaceful co-existence," above.)

"The removal of SHEPILOV represented a victory of one faction of the Presidium over others, at the session of the Plenum of the Central Committee, and led to a further expansion of the circle of the Soviet elite entrusted with real political power. For instance, into the Presidium as a candidate was admitted the Secretary of the Leningrad Gorkom (City Committee) and Obkom (Oblast Committee) of the Party, F. KOZLOV. This indicates that the vote of the Leningrad Party delegation at the Plenum must have been instrumental in defeating the faction supporting SHEPILOV. As the reward for Leningrad delegation action, KOZLOV was admitted into the inner Party circle and was allowed limited access to power. This supports the basic natural law which seems to apply to Soviet internal political manipulations, namely, "Each new struggle for power within the collective leadership group tends to enlarge the circle of holders of power." This law, applicable since the days of the MALENKOV-MOLOTOV-BERIA Triumvirate, appears to retain its validity to the present day.

"It should be pointed out and stressed that the avoidance of identification of the various factions within the Presidium with the names of the members of the Presidium (KHRUSCHEV's MALENKOV's, MOLOTOV's, etc.) in this evaluation is intentional. It is due to the fact that the factions within the Presidium lack ideological foundations, and are based almost entirely upon strategic, and more often, upon tactical positions. As such, the constant changes in the composition of these factions within the Presidium are unprincipled in character.

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"The removal of SHEPILOV after the session of the Supreme Soviet, and the directive of the Plenum of the Central Committee relative to KHRUSCHEV's report ("Pravda, "16 February 1957, see directive No. 2, "To delegate to the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR and to the Council of Ministers of the USSR ... "), indicates that the Council of Ministers is being transformed, more and more, into a technical executive organ in contrast to the initial post-Stalin era attempts to transfer to the Council of Ministers the real power of the Soviet regime."

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